# A Life Offline

I have literally had a computer since birth; the Internet came not long after that: I still remember email addresses supplemented by UUCP bang-paths. Hardly a day has gone by in which I haven't checked my email for what must be a decade.

The Internet has kept me connected to people—as a child, all my best friends were online; as an adult, all my coworkers are. My jobs do not take place in an office; they take place over email, where time and place do not matter. The upside, is that I can go anywhere and still do them. The downside, is I cannot get away from them.

I need to take a break. My life has become entangled with technology and pressure that I hardly know any other way of life. So I'm planning to spend the month of June (June 6 to July 4, to be exact) offline. I'm packing up the laptop and the cable modem and sending them someplace far away. I'm going back to the world of paper and books.

Of course, my phone is now a computer too, so that will also have to go. I don't have a landline, so if folks want to talk to me they'll have to write letters (here's my address). I (amazingly) don't have any clocks or calendars, so I won't even know what time it is. All of which means no more meetings or coordinating to hang out with people. I suppose people could call on me, but honestly, I wish they wouldn't — at least at first.

I don't feel like the kind of person who could survive on Walden Pond — I'm a finicky eater and not a huge fan of animals in any capacity. So locking myself in my apartment seems about as close as I can get. There will of course be the clerks at stores and people on the street, but for the most part I'll be alone.

I've experimented with it a little — both my phone and my laptop have died recently — and it's liberating. Walking down the street or waiting in lines, I find myself checking my phone compulsively, using it to send my mind to some other world of email or news. Without it, I feel grounded. And my laptop is even worse — a beckoning world of IMs to friends, brain-gelatinizing television shows, and an endless pile of emails to answer. It's like a constant stream of depression. A day without it made me feel like I was human again.

I want to be human again. Even if that means isolating myself from the rest of you humans.

What if there's an emergency? Has there ever been an emergency? The biggest urgent things seem to be that my servers go down. Which sucks, but I need to be able to walk away from that. If you have things hosted on one of my machines, contact me now and I'll try to get you enough privileges that you can fix things if they break. If something's really an emergency, I'm sure you'll find me.

Have a nice June.

*You should follow me on twitter here.*

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